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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SURVEY WILL SEEK WAYS TO INCREASE FISH USE IN INLAND U. S. A.

A three-city study which could be the basis for a broad campaign to increase the consumption of fresh fish and shellfish in inland United States will be made during the coming months, John L. Farley, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, said today.

The three cities selected are Nashville, Tennessee; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Portland, Maine. Portland was selected for comparative purposes to determine whether results of promotional efforts to expand the market for fresh fish differ in inland and coastal areas. For the purpose of the study fresh fish are defined as those, dressed or not, which are not frozen, cured or otherwise preserved. Fish which are simply iced are classified as fresh.

Previous studies have shown that the per capita consumption of fresh fish by persons in areas not adjacent to the sea coasts or to the Great Lakes is lower than that of persons living on the seaboard. The purpose of the study is to attempt to learn in more detail why this is so, and to explore ways and means of increasing the consumption of fresh fish in the inland areas.

Wholesalers, retailers and housewives in the three cities will be questioned during the survey. Promotional campaigns will be discussed with fresh fish distributors and follow-up campaigns will appraise the effectiveness of any promotional efforts.

Information will be obtained on the species of fresh fish and shellfish sold in the stores; the quality of the fish and the amount of waste; the availability of the desired species; methods of handling and taking care of the fish; methods of display; dealers' preferences as to prepackaging; policy on markups; possibility of cooperative advertising and other promotional campaigns; trends in fish sales and the reasons.

In addition to the information which will be obtained from dealers who handle fish, interviews will be held with those who do not handle fresh fish to determine their reasons for not doing so.

Housewives to be interviewed will be primarily those who come to the stores to purchase fresh fish. The interviews will be in the store or at the home by appointment. The housewife will be asked if she is satisfied with the quantity and kind of fish available; the type purchased and the type preferred; suggestions on improvements on quality, display, packaging, dressing or other characteristics or factors; circumstances which might induce the housewife to use more fresh fish. In addition, housewives who do not purchase fresh fish will be interviewed to determine their reasons for not doing so.

The study will be made by the Bureau of Business Research, College of Business Administration, Boston College. Interviewing is scheduled to start October 1 and be completed by December 1. Between now and the start of interviewing, specific plans will be discussed with industry, and questionnaires prepared and pretested. The final report is not due until next spring.

The survey is part of the Saltonstall-Kennedy program for increasing production and expanding the market for domestic fishery products.

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